1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

something to bring back. No man will return from a hunting excursion empty handed to face the ridicule and anger of his wife; and as a consequence men are occasionally absent from their homes for two or three days, sleeping in the bush, until they have acquired some game, if nothing more than a turtle or a couple of birds' eggs, to bring back to the household. Under ordinary circumstances a man usually hunts alone with the help of a dog, although hunting parties are occasionally formed for the pursuit of drove animals, such as bush hog, or unwieldy beasts such as maipuri (bush cow). In fishing a man has his own private lines which he tends himself, but when a stream is poisoned, the cooperation of several men, and frequently of women and children, is enlisted.

The women of the household attend to the field products, digging the cassava and gathering the other edibles, as well as the cooking and preparation of all food. In these activities they are assisted by men too old to hunt and by young children. The cutting and preparation of the field, is, however, the man's task. And both the men and the women cooperate to do the planting.

Hunting. In the procuring of land animals, only three kinds of devices are used: the bow-and-arrow, the trap, and, rarely, the shot gun. Blow guns and spears are not in use at the present time, nor is there any memory of their former use by the Caribs. Such contrivances are said by the old men to have been used by the Akawai who formerly had settlements on the river and they are occasionally brought into the area as curiosities from distant Akawai settlements.[1]

Bows are made from four different kinds of wood and vary slightly according to the material. These four varieties are washiba (Carib, same; unidentified), letter wood (Carib, paidya; *Brosium aubletti*), bopa (Carib, same; unidentified), and yarriyarri (Carib, same, *Anaxagorea* sp.). The washiba bow in cross section is a fat oval; it is somewhat flatter on the belly than on the back and the wood is almost black. The letter wood bow has the same general

[1] Alec, for instance, says that when he was young his uncle brought a blow pipe home after he had made a trip to the head of the Cuyuni. There he had bought the weapon from the Akawais. It was made in one piece from a palm stem with the pith removed. His uncle gave him instructions concerning it. If you hit the quarry and it runs away, the poison is spoilt and the blow pipe must be thrown away. "This is because the game runs away with the essence of the poison" robbing the poison on your unused darts of its power and the weapon of its efficacy. To be successful you must try to hit the game two or three times and cut out the parts around the wounds.

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a child (1936:76). No adult of reproductive age seems to have remained for long outside of a marriage bond. Extramarital sexual encounters were not uncommon, and adolescents were not prevented from sexual experimentation (1936:72). The separation of sexual partners did not intervene to limit population size.

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Contraceptive measures are reported to have been familiar to both men and women (1936:73). These include "bush medicines" and "ritualistic treatments" performed by a piaiman or shaman. However, the exact species are not identified and their efficacy as well as the incidence of their use are not noted. Old women were reported to have been experienced in inducing abortions through the use of an infusion of bush herbs and manual manipulation including the insertion of small, sharp sticks.

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Aside from these behavioral controls, there apparently were physiological factors at work. These are mentioned but their effects cannot be established. Gillin notes, for example, that it was rare for an adolescent girl to become pregnant (1936:73). Regarding this observation, Gillin suggests that temporary sterility and ineptness of technique may explain the lack of pregnancies. Also, the incidence of malaria, hook worm, round worm, and other parasites may have contributed to periods of sexual inactivity and temporary sterility as well as affecting the mortality of infants and others.

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In sum, for the 1932-33 period, those behavioral and physiological factors which affected population size were recorded without regard for their situational context. Still, the reproductive results seem clear: i.e., the ratio of adults to children was about one to one in

163 The number of children ever born range between four and seven to
*177 those women who are fifty-five or older. The range is eight to fourteen for the women between forty and fifty-four. In other words, the seven women fifty-five and older have had a total of thirty-seven children of which thirty survived to adulthood. To date, the seven women forty to fifty-four have had a total of eighty-one children of which sixty-five survive. And some women in this younger age group have not ceased reproducing. The women in this category are subdivided into those forty to forty-four and those forty-five to fifty-four so that further reproductive potential is evident. The average is 5.3 children ever born with 4.3 surviving to adulthood for the women fifty-five and older. For the women forty to fifty-four, the average is 11.6 children ever born with 9.3 surviving. This is more than a doubling of the number of births as well as those children surviving.

The 1960 Government census provides a check on the age group of women fifty-five and older. At that time, these women were forty-five and older. Birth records collected at that time are reported in Table 11. The same pattern of a greater number of births to younger women is apparent.

842 Concerning a popular knowledge of contraception, ignorance for
[887] the most part is expressed by both men and women. It is known that
[278] older women can identify a small leaf and a vine which boiled together and administered as a drink is supposed to render a woman permanently
847 sterile. No one is reported to have used this measure. An effective method, infanticide, is practiced.[16] This may occur with a young

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 71]